



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 8b
April 5, 2012

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

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TO: Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner

RE: *The Learning Community Charter School: Maximum Enrollment Request*

On February 2, 2012, The Learning Community submitted a charter amendment request to increase its maximum enrollment from 540 to 558 students (a 3.3% increase).

The Learning Community is committed to enrolling 63 students per grade level (21 students per classroom) in grades K-5, and 60 students per grade level (20 students per classroom) in grades 6-8, for a total of 558 students. The school strives for full enrollment in each classroom throughout each school year.

Due to a quirk of The Learning Community's original charter approval in 2004, initial funding covered only 100 students total in grades K and 1, rather than 120. As a result, the initial student cohort, in grade eight this year, is made up of only 40 students, rather than the 60 to 63 students at every other grade level. Now, as these eighth graders prepare to enter high school next fall, The Learning Community will be admitting a cohort of 63 new kindergartners for 2012-13. It is this one-time instance of more incoming students than outgoing students that prompted The Learning Community to seek an increase in maximum student enrollment.

The key criteria for granting such a request are the successes of the school's education program. This is consistent with the state's new focus on charter school quality. Under our new expectations only charter schools that are high performing should expand.

We examined the school's overall performance in relation to the state and sending districts; performance by demographic subgroups; and performance compared to demographically similar schools.

Therefore, I RECOMMEND THAT, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education approves the Learning Community Charter School's Request for Enrolment Increase from 540 students to 558 students, as presented.